

Appl. No. 09/629,904
Amdt. Dated Dec. 9, 2003
Reply to Office Action of Sept. 10, 2003

AMENDMENTS to the CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application. An identifier indicating the status of each claim is provided.

B/ 17.(currently amended) A method for transmitting an e-mail message comprising the steps of:

receiving the e-mail message at an intermediate address, the e-mail message including non-preferred e-mail address data, the e-mail message having been previously transmitted to an invalid e-mail address and transmitted back to a sender e-mail address;

parsing the non-preferred e-mail address data from the e-mail message at the intermediate address and determining if there is preferred e-mail address data associated with the non-preferred e-mail address data; and

storing, at a location associated with the intermediate address, the non-preferred e-mail address data when it is determined that there is no preferred e-mail address data associated with the non-preferred e-mail address data.

18. (original) The method as recited in Claim 17, further comprising the step of:

transmitting the e-mail message to the preferred e-mail address when preferred e-mail address data is associated with the non-preferred e-mail address data.

19. (original) The method as recited in Claim 18, further comprising the step of sending a return e-mail message to a sender address from the intermediate address indicating that the e-mail message has been sent to the preferred e-mail address.

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20. (original) The method as recited in Claim 17, further comprising the step of sending a return e-mail message to a sender address from the intermediate address indicating that the e-mail message was not forwarded to the preferred e-mail address.

21. (original) The method as recited in Claim 20, further comprising indicating to the sender that the intermediate address will withdraw the e-mail message upon receiving a request from the sender address.

22. (original) The method as recited in Claim 17, further comprising the step of transmitting an e-mail message to the preferred e-mail address indicating that a user at a sender e-mail address is attempting to transmit an e-mail message to the non-preferred e-mail address.

23. (original) The method as recited in Claim 17, wherein the storing step further comprising the step of:

storing the non-preferred e-mail address data until a recipient registers the preferred e-mail address data.

24. (currently amended) A method for transmitting an e-mail message that has been sent from a sender address to a previously-known recipient e-mail address and rejected at the previously-known recipient e-mail address and transmitted back to the sender address, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving the rejected e-mail message at an intermediate address;

determining a preferred recipient e-mail address from the rejected e-mail message; and

storing, at a location associated with the intermediate address, the previously-known recipient e-mail address when it is determined that there is no preferred recipient e-mail address associated with the previously-known recipient

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e-mail address.

25. (original) The method as recited in Claim 24, further comprising the step of:

transmitting the e-mail message to the preferred recipient e-mail address when a preferred recipient e-mail address is associated with the previously-known recipient e-mail address.

26. (original) The method as recited in Claim 24, further comprising the step of sending a return e-mail message to a sender address from the intermediate address indicating that the e-mail message has been sent to the preferred recipient e-mail address.

27. (original) The method as recited in Claim 24, further comprising the step of sending a return e-mail message to a sender address from the intermediate address indicating that the e-mail message was not forwarded to the preferred recipient e-mail address.

28.(original) The method as recited in Claim 27, further comprising indicating to the sender that the intermediate address will withdraw the e-mail message upon receiving a request from the sender address.

29.(original) The method as claimed in Claim 24 further comprising the step of transmitting an e-mail message to the preferred recipient e-mail address indicating that a user at a sender e-mail address is attempting to transmit an e-mail message to the previously-known recipient e-mail address.

30.(original) The method as recited in Claim 24, wherein the storing step further comprising the step of:

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storing the non-preferred e-mail address data until a recipient registers the preferred e-mail address data.

B1 31.(currently amended) A method for transmitting an e-mail message that was sent from a sender address to a previously-known recipient e-mail address that is associated with a first service provider, and rejected at the previously-known recipient e-mail address and transmitted back to the sender address, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving the rejected e-mail message at a second address;
determining whether there is a preferred recipient e-mail address, that is associated with a second service provider, from the rejected e-mail message; and
storing, at a location associated with the intermediate address, the previously-known recipient e-mail address when it is determined that there is no preferred recipient e-mail address associated with the previously-known e-mail address.

32.(currently amended) A method for transmitting an e-mail message that has been sent from a sender address to a second address, rejected at the second address and transmitted back to the sender address, the e-mail message including a non-preferred e-mail address associated with a first service provider, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving the e-mail message at an intermediate address~~the second address~~;
parsing the e-mail message to obtain the non-preferred e-mail address from the e-mail message;
determining whether there is a preferred e-mail address, that is associated with a second service provider, from the non-preferred e-mail address; and
storing, at a location associated with the intermediate address, the non-preferred recipient e-mail address when it is determined that there is no preferred

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recipient e-mail address associated with the non-preferred e-mail address.

✓ 33. (canceled)

B1
34. (currently amended) A method for transmitting an e-mail message comprising the steps of:

 sending a first e-mail message from a sender address to a non-preferred recipient e-mail address; and

 receiving, at the sender address, a second e-mail message from a second address, which is independent from the non-preferred e-mail address, indicating that the non-preferred recipient e-mail address is not preferred and that there is not a preferred recipient e-mail address associated with the non-preferred e-mail address.

✓ 35. (canceled)

✓ 36. (canceled)
